As we get older, it becomes more difficult to remember experiences that we had when we were younger. I know for myself, there isn’t much I can specifically remember from my early schooling days. However, there are general concepts that I do remember. Each individual has a different experience as they go through school and receive an education. For the most part, elementary years are the building blocks for being a successful student. As you move on to grade school, you begin to learn easy concepts of math, science, English, social studies etc. In middle school, you find your circle of friends and have an open mind about finding your niche. The experiences we have throughout these early years have an influence on the person we become.

I don’t remember much from elementary school. I do remember my first day of kindergarten, though. My mother put me on the bus in the morning and she forgot to give me my lunch bag as she had it over her shoulder. Before the bus pulled away from the stop, I cried and cried, banging on the window until she finally realized. What a great way to start off. I remember having naptime and having guest readers come into the class every so often. First grade was a rough year for me. My mother underwent brain surgery and I was too young to really understand. My emotions were running wild and the tears and fits never seemed to stop. Thankfully, I was lucky enough to have an amazing teacher that year. Her name was Mrs. Sorgie. She was the most compassionate, kindhearted, trustful woman I knew. I wouldn’t have gotten through that tough time if it weren’t for her. To this day, we keep in touch and speak every so often. She is someone I would like to keep in my life for a very long time. Second grade is a bit of a blur to me. I assume at that point I was ready to move onto grade school and become a “big girl.”

When I think back to third grade, I don’t have many vivid memories. However, I do remember meeting some of my very good friends that year. Fourth grade was one of my favorite years. During the summer, I found out that I was placed in an inclusion class. Being that I was only ten years old, I didn’t know what that meant. I can remember my parents being angry about my placement. I didn’t understand why. They told me it was because I would be too focused on helping the slower learning students, that I wouldn’t focus on myself. Ironically, my best friend was placed in that same class. So then it was a done deal, I stayed in the class. That year, I had another wonderful teacher. She was definitely one of my favorites. Mrs. LaMountain was awesome. She was a great teacher but an even better person. She had such a big heart and she gave every student the attention that they needed. She was more of a friend to me rather than a teacher. We created a very special relationship. We too, keep in touch and talk every so often. I don’t remember much about fifth grade, besides the moving up ceremony.

Middle school was a rebellious few years for me. I was so obsessed with the idea of being in middle school and having more freedom. Sixth grade I met my group of friends and my absolute best friends. Those relationships are still just as strong today. I also began “dating” a boy in sixth grade. It was a very unhealthy relationship that lasted way too long, but definitely helped me realize a lot about myself. I remember that I always wanted to go out on the weekends and I always wanted a later curfew. I struggled hard in classes that year because I was so into being “popular.” In seventh grade I began taking honors classes. It was then when I realized I was actually pretty bright when I set my mind to doing things. It was also seventh grade when I realized that math and science were not my strong points. I remember begging my parents for tutors because I was getting below average in those classes and that was not an option for me. Eighth grade, I buckled down knowing that my grades would transfer to high school. I took my first regents tests that year. That was the year I realized I’m a terrible test taker and that I shouldn’t always base my intelligence off my test grades. For superlatives, I won “best communicator.” My leadership skills paid off and teachers noticed my eagerness to help others and speak up. In middle school I didn’t really have a teacher who was very influential. It’s different being in their class only forty minutes a day compared to being with them for seven hours a day.

My early schooling prepared me for the next steps in life. I learned which subjects were my strongest and which ones were my weakest. I discovered the subjects that interested me and the ones I had no interest in. I also learned that I’m a visual learner. By the time high school came around, I was fully prepared and ready for any obstacle that came my way.